

## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Rachel Carson is one of over 500 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The National Wildlife Refuge System is a network of lands and waters managed specifically for the protection of wildlife and wildlife habitat and represents the most comprehensive wildlife management program in the world. Units of the system stretch across the United States from northern Alaska to the Florida Keys and include small islands in the Caribbean and South Pacific. The character of the refuges is as diverse as the nation itself.

The Service also manages national fish hatcheries, and provides federal leadership in habitat protection, technical assistance, and the conservation and protection of migratory birds, certain marine mammals and threatened and endangered species.

For further information, please contact:

Refuge Manager  
Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge  
321 Port Road  
Wells, Maine 04090  
Telephone: (207) 646-9226

Hearing impaired visitors may call the Maine Relay Center at 1-800-437-1220 TDD/1-800-457-1220 voice.



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

October 1996

# Reptiles & Amphibians



**RACHEL CARSON**  
National Wildlife Refuge  
Wells, Maine

Welcome to Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge consists of ten separate divisions located along Maine's southern coast between Portland and Kittery. Protecting estuaries, salt-marshes and adjacent upland areas, the 5,000 acre refuge provides important habitat for shorebirds, waterfowl, song-birds and a variety of mammals.

Many reptiles and amphibians (herps) are permanent residents of the refuge. During the breeding season, in early spring, many of the herps can be observed or heard around ponds, vernal (seasonal) pools and streams.

The following list of 35 species includes all the reptiles and amphibians which are known inhabitants of the refuge. The common and scientific names and order of listing follow *The Amphibians and Reptiles of Maine*, July 1992. Should you spot a rare or unusual species, please contact the refuge manager at Rachel Carson NWR, 321 Port Road, Wells, ME 04090 or call (207) 646-9226.



\*Species listed as endangered (E), threatened (T) or species of concern (C) by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

## Reptiles (Reptilla)

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### Snapping Turtle

(*Chelydra serpentina*)

Common bottom dweller in any permanent water. Prefers still, murky water with dense vegetation.

### Common Musk Turtle (Stinkpot)

(*Sternotherus odoratus*)

Common inhabitant of slow-moving streams and shallow, mud-bottomed permanent ponds. Produces a strong musky odor when disturbed.

### \*Spotted Turtle

(*Clemmys guttata*)

(T) Common on the refuge. Inhabits ponds, marshes and wet meadows. Frequently observed during the warm months basking on logs.

### Wood Turtle

(*Clemmys insculpta*)

Uncommon on the refuge. Prefers streams and small rivers adjacent to woodlands and meadows. Terrestrial during spring and summer, returning to water in the fall to mate. Accomplished climber.

### \*Blanding's Turtle

(*Emydoidea blandingi*)

(T) Uncommon in Maine, with greatest occurrence in southern Maine. Primarily aquatic, frequenting marshes, shrubby swamps and slow-moving water.

### \*Eastern Box Turtle

(*Terrapene carolina*)

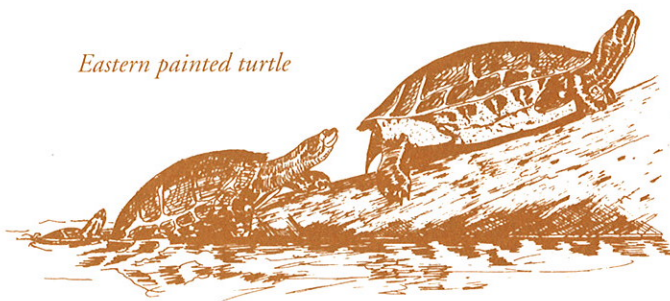
(E) Maine's rarest reptile. Found in fields, open woods and meadows situated near water.

### Eastern Painted Turtle

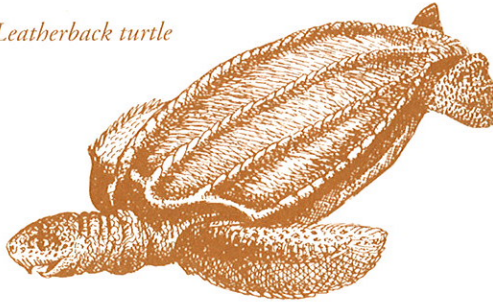
(*Chrysemys picta*)

Abundant. Has the widest range of any turtle in North America, although restricted to areas within 60 kilometers of the coast. Prefers quiet, slow-moving water with abundant submerged vegetation. Frequently observed basking on logs or rocks on warm, sunny days.

*Eastern painted turtle*



*Leatherback turtle*



*Robert Savannah*

## Marine Turtles of the Gulf of Maine

### \*Leatherback Turtle

(*Dermochelys coriacea*)

(E) Listed by both Federal and State agencies.

### \*Loggerhead Turtle

(*Caretta caretta*)

(T) Listed by both Federal and State agencies.

### \*Atlantic Ridley Turtle

(*Lepidochelys kempii*)

(E) Listed by both Federal and State agencies.

### \*Northern Black Racer

(*Coulber constrictor*)

(E) Uncommon in Maine. (The only substantial population is reported in Wells and Kennebunk.) Highly terrestrial and fast-moving. Favors dry scrub forests.

### Ringneck Snake

(*Diadophis punctatus*)

Common. Relatively small. Not easily observed; elusive. Burrows under leaves, rocks and woodpiles in moist soil habitats. Nocturnal.

### Eastern Milk Snake

(*Lampropeltis triangulum*)

Common. Favors woody or brushy areas, bogs and meadows. Often found close to frequently disturbed areas. Shakes its tail, creating a rattlesnake-like sound when in dry leaves.

### Northern Water Snake

(*Nerodia sipedon*)

Common in most aquatic habitats, favoring slow-moving water. Often observed swimming or basking near water.

### Smooth Green Snake

(*Opheodrys vernalis*)

Common. Only green snake in Maine. Favors grassy upland meadows, vacant lots and lawns. Experienced climber.

### Northern Brown Snake

(*Storeria dekayi*)

Range and total population is not classified. Greatest densities in Maine appear to be near York County. Favors damp woods. Hides under rocks and vegetation.

### Redbelly Snake

(*Storeria occipitomaculata*)

Rare. Frequents shoreline areas of freshwater ponds, lakes and streams. Also utilizes cut-over areas and gravel pits.

### \*Eastern Ribbon Snake

(*Thamnophis sauritus*)

(C) Rare. Similar in appearance to garter snake; has stripes along sides with no diamond-like pattern. Semi-aquatic species; seldom wanders far from water or vegetation.

### Common Garter Snake

(*Thamnophis sirtalis*)

Maine's most abundant reptile. Dozens may be found together at one time. Inhabits moist fields, lawns, forests, meadows and marshes. Active from late February through October.



## **Amphibians (Amphibia)**

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### **American Toad**

(*Bufo americanus*)

Common inhabitant of the refuge. Found in moist woodlands. Breeds on the edges of shallow ponds and vernal pools during March and April.

### **Gray Treefrog**

(*Hyla versicolor*)

Common. Has twice as many chromosomes as all other frogs. Features unique toepads, which aid in climbing trees. Breeds during late April and May in pools of standing water.

### **Northern Spring Peeper**

(*Pseudacris crucifer*)

Abundant. Smallest frog in Maine. Difficult to observe, but easily heard. Among the first amphibians to breed in March and April. Breeds in any fresh, shallow standing water. Adult life spent in moist woods and meadows.

### **Bullfrog**

(*Rana catesbeiana*)

Common. Largest frog in the United States. Breeds during May and June on shorelines of large permanent bodies of water with emergent vegetation. Adults stay close to wet habitats. Only amphibian with a game species status.

### **Green Frog**

(*Rana clamitans*)

Abundant. Breeds in any standing water during April and May. Adults stay close to wet marshy areas. Emits a loud cry when leaping from danger.

### **Northern Leopard Frog**

(*Rana pipiens*)

Common. Similar in appearance to the pickerel frog. Breeds during March and April around vegetated margins of swamps and flooded meadows. Found in wet woods during the summer months.

### **Pickerel Frog**

(*Rana palustris*)

Abundant. Well camouflaged. Breeds during March and April around densely vegetated areas near permanent bodies of water. Often found far from water in summer.

### **Wood Frog**

(*Rana sylvatica*)

Abundant. First to appear in the spring. Relatively small. More often heard than seen; emits a loud "wrunk"-like call. Adults common amongst leaf litter. Can be found far from water.

### **Blue-spotted Salamander**

(*Ambystoma laterale*)

Common but secretive. Emerges from the ground to breed in vernal pools during the first thaw (March). Favors areas with dense moss.



*Spotted salamander*

### **Spotted Salamander**

(*Ambystoma maculatum*)

Abundant. Breeds in vernal pools and slow-moving streams. Prefers deciduous or mixed woodlands. Burrows in loose soil.

### **Eastern Newt, Red Eft**

(*Notophthalmus viridescens*)

Abundant. Maine's most aquatic salamander. Both adults and larvae favor ponds with dense aquatic vegetation. Terrestrial juveniles, called efts, are found in moist woodlands. Adults have a keeled tail.

### **Dusky Salamander**

(*Desmognathus fuscus*)

Uncommon. A stream dweller. Lives under rocks in swift-moving streams.

### **Spring Salamander**

(*Gyrinophilus porphyriticus*)

Common. Requires clean, cold undisturbed streams with ample oxygen supply.

### **Two-lined Salamander**

(*Eurycea bislineata*)

Abundant throughout the refuge in any swift-moving stream.

### **Four-toed Salamander**

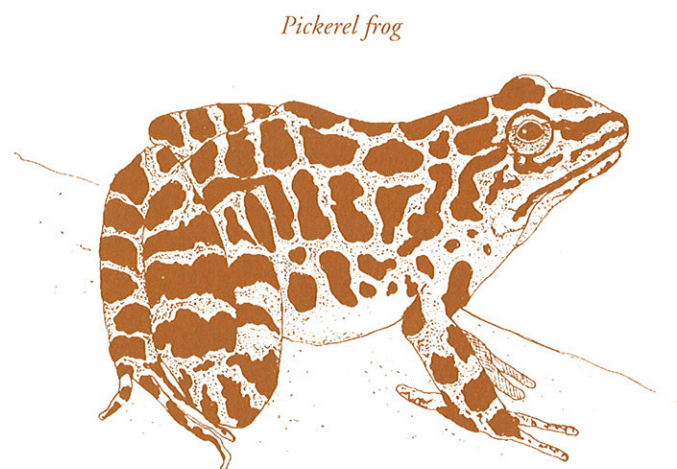
(*Hemidactylium scutatum*)

Rare. Favors forested areas with wet sphagnum moss. Adults are generally terrestrial.

### **Redback Salamander**

(*Plethodon cinereus*)

Most abundant amphibian and vertebrate in Maine. Hides under leaf litter, logs, bark or rocks in moist habitats.



*Pickerel frog*

## Hypothetical and/or Accidental Listing of Species Based on Reported Ranges

### Fowler's Toad

(*Bufo woodhousei fowleri*)

### Hognose Snake

(*Heterodon platyrhinos*)

### Marbled Salamander

(*Ambystoma opacum*)

### Jefferson's Salamander

(*Ambystoma jeffersonianum*)

### Slimy Salamander

(*Plethodon glutinosus*)

### Notes

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Observers \_\_\_\_\_

Weather \_\_\_\_\_

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